

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 16, 2014 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

1B

TEMPLATES FOR PROGRESSIVE ACTION

Session Moderator: Julie Villegas, English

171 MGH

12:30 PM to 2:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Japan's Gender

Michelle Jacqueline (Michelle) Arkham, Senior, Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies

Mentor: Beverley Yamamoto, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Osaka University

Japan appears to be one of the most gender-segregated countries remaining in the developed world, and as such, appears to the Western eye to be a society built on gender difference. This segregation is reinforced by several elements of Japanese society, two of which being the gendered nature of the Japanese language and roles men and women are pressured to play in society, by society itself. It would be tempting to describe these roles as 'traditional', but these 'traditional roles' are actually practices that came in with the process of modernization. Despite this, Japanese society contains elements that work against the overarching binary narrative of gender. Gender non-conforming people are visible and, to a certain degree, frequent within Japan's social landscape. On the surface, this would give Japan an appearance of duality; of rigidity and flexibility when it comes to gender identity. Perhaps the most extreme example of a gender non-conforming person is a transgendered person. If we consider the lives of transgendered people in Japan, does Japan prove to be as accepting of such people as it appears? These questions are explored by reading scholarly research by both Western and Japanese scholars, first-hand narrations found online via the buzzing world of social networking and video sharing services, and documentary films centered on modern-day Japan. What I hope to reveal in my research is a complex web of gender representations, performance, and cultural tolerance/intolerance within what remains a very rigid social structure.

Weaving the Future: Clothing and Mayan Resistance in Guatemala

Katrina Lorraine (Katrina) Cohn, Senior, Global Studies (Bothell)

Mentor: Julie Shayne, Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences

This paper asks how weaving and traditional clothing are used as a means of resistance within the Maya Movement of Guatemala. Although historical evidence and cultural traditions confirm the use of backstrap looms before the arrival of the Spanish, the use of traditional clothing and weaving techniques are often maligned as vestiges of colonial repression and backwardness by the dominant Ladino culture of Guatemala. Those who choose to wear traditional Mayan clothing face discrimination, stereotyping, and hostility. Mayan clothing denotes the sex, age, marital status, regional affiliation, and village of origin of the wearer through the use of different weaving techniques, designs, style, and color. As a result of their inability to find work or navigate through the Ladino culture outside of their communities, most Mayan men have adopted Western style clothing. As such, women have been tasked with sustaining the culture within their communities through the art of weaving and the clothing it produces. The weavers are able to incorporate their cultural history and ideas into the cloth they create. Weaving, clothing, and Mayan identity cannot be easily separated. Due to the high visibility, traditional meaning, and customizable nature of Mayan weaving, clothing has been adapted by Mayan resistance movements as a means of cultural resistance. I argue that weaving and traditional clothing are being used by the Maya Movement to inspire pride and connection with traditional culture as a means to reassert Mayan heritage within Guatemala. Not only has the popularity and use of traditional Mayan clothing grown in recent years, but the meanings and traditions continue to grow and change along with the culture. Research for this paper is based on a mix of primary and secondary sources including scholarly analyses of Mayan resistance movements, history of weaving techniques and clothing, blogs, international newspaper articles, and documentaries.

Shunning the Authority: Consumption of Non-certified Organic Foods in Chengdu, China

Su Min Alana (Alana) Kim, Senior, International Studies, Geography

Mary Gates Scholar, UW Honors Program

Mentor: Stevan Harrell, Anthropology

Mentor: Daniel Abramson, Urban Design and Planning

This project explores a grassroots organic food movement in Chengdu, China through a case study of an organic co-op in Anlong Village in the outskirts of the city. Due to its small size and inadequacy of official organic certification standards, the Anlong farmers refer to their produce “ecological” vegetables, as opposed to “organic” vegetables. Since the farms converted to “ecological” production in 2006, small, but growing number of Chengdu urbanites has turned to Anlong farms for a source of healthy and fresh organic produce while other affluent urban consumers enjoy organic products at metropolitan supermarkets. Given that the produce of these farms in Anlong is not officially certified, and given the fact that the cost of the produce is still on par with certified organic produce, why are they gaining popularity among urban customers who could easily buy similar produce at a shopping center nearby? Based on analyses of semi-structured interviews I conducted with Anlong farmers and customers and field observation, I argue that the consumption of Anlong products carries significance that extends beyond actual processes of production to suggest a symbolic purity untainted by the government association. In China, due to a series of reports on counterfeit food labels and the limited success of government regulations on food industry, government certified labels hardly evince moral attributes of organic foods, but generate negative interpretations. Anlong’s produce absent an official label shuns such suspicion and validates honest values that the organic agriculture elicits.

Progressing Gender and Race Objectives: Equality Mainstreaming and Intersectionality in Brazilian Public Policy

Clara Clemente (Clara) Langevin, Senior, International Studies

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Jonathan Warren, Jackson School of International Studies

Equality Mainstreaming and Intersectionality are concepts that are subject to different kinds of interpretations and are often adopted to a certain extent in public policy all over the world. Equality mainstreaming refers to the widespread incorporation of anti-discrimination into public policy. Intersectionality refers to the concept that personhood is not a monolithic experience of gender, race or another factor, but rather a combination of all these factors that affect an individual’s experience. My research focuses on the incorporation of these concepts into Brazilian public policy. Brazil is

a country that is still struggling with various kinds of discrimination, namely racism and sexism, but the creation of Ministries and government agencies dedicated to fighting discrimination have ushered in innovating legislation. Through a discourse analysis of government materials, primarily public policy briefs, task forces, interviews of the Ministers involved in these public policies and informative pamphlets about public policies, I was able to distinguish between explicit and implicit discourses within Brazilian equality oriented public policy. Explicitly the Brazilian government articulates an all-encompassing equality movement. However I have encountered implicit discourses that show that gender and race concerns are at the forefront of equality oriented policies and the concept of intersectionality almost exclusively represents Afro-Brazilian women. Although this detracts attention from other vulnerable populations, Brazil’s unique history of discrimination against Afro-Brazilians and women calls for this increased consideration.

Convergence in the “Unlucky” Village: Local Models of Development in Central Uganda

Haley Rose (Haley) Millet, Senior, Public Health-Global Health, Anthropology: Medical Anth & Global Hlth

Mary Gates Scholar, UW Honors Program

Mentor: Devon Pena, Anthropology

Four displaced ethnic groups populate Kyakitanga village in central Uganda. The community collaborates with small NGOs and local ministries to address conditions of “underdevelopment” and at a August 2012 workshop, participants expressed a priority of increasing community wisdom concerning “modern” food production. In a place-based subsistence community, such wisdom may be framed as Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). This research explores Kyakitangan TEK as it already exists, aims to identify the local food sovereignty development model, and the implications of that model for social equity and environmental sustainability. These questions were explored through a participatory action research study involving local-led grand tours, object-and-walking probe interviews, alternative talking circles, and pile sorts. Findings indicate Kyakitangans possess tremendous TEK concerning foraging, agriculture, and pastoralism. This TEK is tied to ethnicity, as different foodways function as survival strategies specific to each group’s ancestral history and environment. Contrary to the 2012 workshop’s “modernist” atmosphere, Kyakitangans actually advocate a development model utilizing knowledge and resources already existent within the community. Implications pose questions about how ethnic groups collaborate moving forward since different foodways entail different land-shaping impacts and the livelihoods of each group are linked to each other. These dynamics are contextualized in the region’s political economic and cultural history, because the question of food insecurity is a by-product of peoples’ physical separation from native lands. This is exacerbated by structural vio-

lence and historical trauma of post-independence regimes and neoliberal globalization. Open-endedness in methodology allowed for the surfacing of important issues surrounding gender and reproductive control. Overall, the Kyakitangan context presents alternative models of development which privilege local knowledge. This type of model in broader development discourse is currently marginal, co-opted, or nonexistent.

Violence, Sexism and the Media: The Fight for Women's Rights in Contemporary Italy

Natalie Kathleen (Natalie) Parrish, Senior, Comparative History of Ideas, Italian

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Stacey Moran, Comparative History of Ideas

Incidents of violence against women in Italy have been consistently on the rise for the past decade. Only this past summer did the Italian government ratify a Council of Europe treaty making violence against women illegal. Yet, prior to this past decade, Italy has had a history of women's rights activism and feminism that reached its peak in the 1970s and 1980s. During the peak of the women's rights movement in Italy, women succeeded in passing divorce law and overturning laws that forced them to marry their rapists, in addition to eliminating sentencing statutes that penalized murderers with no more than three years imprisonment if their victims were deemed to be adulteresses. Yet, the great strides of the 1970s toward Italian gender equality have slowed exponentially in the 40 years since. My research is seeking to understand what has hindered the Italian women's movement in the last forty years and if these hindrances are connected to the increase in violence against women and sexism within the country. I draw on qualitative interviews with Italian women, scholarly essays and books on Italian feminism, media, government and the Italian women's movement, as well as autoethnography from my own study abroad programs in Italy. I consider how the cultural traditions and the autocratic media mogul and former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi have encumbered the movement for Italian women's rights in Italy. My project attempts to draw attention to the disparities in the rights and treatment of Italian women from the late half of the 20th century to today.

Ambiguous Alimentation: Food as Cultural Capital in the Preservation of Martinican Culture

Shawna Bird (Shawna) Proske, Senior, French

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Richard Watts, French & Italian Studies

Food is a sort of cultural capital; it tells a story of the history and people of a region, directly bound to their cultural identity. In Martinique, for example, to eat is to become uniquely acquainted with Martinican culture - including the inherent problems in the sustainability of the island's food web and

the attainability of a Martinican "Creole" identity. Despite its status as an overseas department of France, the island's society sees itself not as French, but as uniquely Creole, in opposition to "Frenchness". The food web reflects this social struggle for national identity, and shows how Martinicans have built an identity, independent of Frenchness, that they seek to hold on to through traditional food practices. It shows how the ways of eating and the ways of thinking of oneself as Martinican are mired in ambiguity, since one cannot be Creole, without having a "Frenchness" about them. Through the exoticization of Martinican cuisine, especially with tourism websites boasting the island's unique spices and foodways, Martinicans have a chance to preserve parts of their culture, including methods of production, communal food roles, and linguistics. This thesis outlines the history of Martinican cuisine, first showing what must be preserved, and why. I then discuss the dangers inherent in the food web, including lack of sustainability as a part of Martinican reliance on the "colonizer", pesticide use, and overconsumption. Last, I outline the strengths of Martinican foodways, and the ways in which Martinicans are working to overcome the challenges of eating in their own country. With the fear of losing their identity, Martinicans are seizing and demonstrating their Creoleness, especially through food, as a unique identity in an increasingly globalized world. Their cuisine tells that story.

Romani Musicians and their Impact on the "Roma Question"

Clara Elaine (Clara) Summers, Senior, Eastern European Languages, Literature & Culture, Anthropology

Mary Gates Scholar, UW Honors Program

Mentor: Laada Bilaniuk, Anthropology

The uneasy coexistence between ethnic Czechs and Roma has recently been flaring up in anti-Roma protests and riots throughout the Czech Republic. Tensions between Czechs and Roma have been strained for some time, and general Czech attitudes towards Roma are decidedly negative. Despite this, Roma have a significant presence in the popular music industry, indicating that there is something different about how Romani musicians are perceived. This research will seek to understand the general relationship between ethnic Czechs and Roma, Czech attitudes towards Romani musicians, and what shapes these attitudes. Using media, comments on public Internet forums, ethnography, and interviews, this research seeks to understand the underlying Czech values that make Roma acceptable, and often popular, within a musical setting. Understanding how attitudes towards musicians positively differ from those towards other Roma might help us understand the basis of negative attitudes and use this knowledge to address policy formation.